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INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

REPORT OF THE ACC SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES ON ITS FOURTEENTH SESSION

(INSTRAW headquarters, Santo Domingo, 6-8 October 1993)

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I. MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A. Opening of the session

(Agenda item 1)

1. The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Subcommittee on Water Resources held its fourteenth session from 6 to 8 October 1993 in Santo Domingo. The list of participants is contained in annex I to the present document. The agenda for the session, as adopted by the ACC Subcommittee, is contained in annex II. The list of documents before the ACC Subcommittee at its fourteenth session is contained in annex III. The members of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources present at the session lamented the absence of representatives from the regional commissions and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) due to severe financial constraints on travel. They also regretted the absence of a representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It was felt that the fullest possible representation from the members of the Subcommittee was essential in order for it to fully carry out its coordination functions in relation to chapter 18 of Agenda 21. 1/

B. Strengthening cooperation and coordination in the field of water resources

(Agenda item 4)

1. Terms of reference of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources and of the Inter-agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation (agenda item 4 (a))

2. The Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development, at its first meeting, recommended 2/ that the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources should be continued as a single focal point for inter-agency coordination in the areas of water resources, and that its terms of reference should be updated to include the implementation of Agenda 21. The Inter-agency Committee also recommended 3/ that the ACC Subcommittee should consider ways of fostering coordination at the country level, with a view to assisting Governments in strengthening the capacity to manage their water resources in an integrated manner.

3. Having carried out this review, the members of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources recommended the following revised terms of reference for the consideration of the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development:

1. General system-wide coordination in the field of water resources

4. The ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources is the single focal point for United Nations system-wide coordination with respect to the implementation of the water-related provisions of Agenda 21 and other, related issues that need to be drawn to the attention of the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Committee on Natural Resources, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

2. Identification of emerging issues and formulation of policy guidelines

5. The ACC Subcommittee acts as the focal point for the analysis of issues confronting the organizations of the United Nations system in the implementation of the water-related provisions of Agenda 21 and other mandates from intergovernmental bodies, with a view to formulating policy guidelines for concerted action by these organizations, including recommendations for consideration by relevant intergovernmental bodies.

3. Formulation of common strategies and joint programmes and activities among the organizations of the United Nations system

6. Given the complex interdisciplinary nature of activities related to the integrated and sustainable development of water resources, and the diverse frames of reference of the various organizations of the United Nations system, the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources formulates common strategies and promotes joint programmes and activities concerning the monitoring of the follow-up and implementation of the recommendations contained in the seven programme areas of chapter 18 of Agenda 21, based on an agreed assessment of problems and issues. As part of joint programme efforts, the ACC Subcommittee provides the machinery for the monitoring of progress and issues in the implementation of chapter 18 of Agenda 21, and for periodic assessments of the state of the freshwater resources of the world.

4. Assistance in the preparation of analytical reports to intergovernmental bodies

7. The ACC Subcommittee assists in the preparation of reports for the Commission on Sustainable Development, for other intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations (the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Committee on Natural Resources) and for other organizations by providing inputs for the reports and by formulating policy recommendations for the consideration of those intergovernmental bodies concerning action by the organizations of the United Nations system and by Governments.

5. Systematic exchange of information on work programmes and activities of the organizations of the United Nations system

8. The ACC Subcommittee provides a mechanism for the establishment of an information network regarding current and future programmes and activities of the organizations of the United Nations system, with a view to avoiding duplication and overlap and to harmonizing programmes.

6. Enhancement of water resources development and management at the country level including coordinated approaches by the organizations of the United Nations system

9. Coordination of United Nations system activities at the country level is normally the responsibility of the United Nations resident coordinators in consultation with national Governments. The diverse and often fragmented activities concerning integrated water resources development and management, divided among national government agencies, the United Nations system, bilateral

and multilateral financing agencies, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations, calls for special approaches for cohesive programming, and the ACC Subcommittee should have some input in formulating those approaches.

10. The ACC Subcommittee examines ways of enhancing country-level coordination, and will keep the situation under review, bearing in mind the many other initiatives in other sectors and the changing nature of technical cooperation. It reports periodically on this topic to the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development.

7. Cooperation with organizations outside the United Nations system

11. The ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources provides a mechanism for establishing a dialogue with international, regional and bilateral organizations, as well as with non-governmental scientific and professional organizations that are active in the field of water resources. This would be done through working groups established by the ACC Subcommittee, or through informal consultations through the ACC Subcommittee itself.

8. Raising awareness of the importance of water resources

12. The ACC Subcommittee acts as the technical adviser to the normal public information outlets of the United Nations system, in particular with regard to World Day for Water, including the choice of topics to be the subject of observance of the Day in any given year, and the organization of the celebrations.

13. The ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources will meet in regular sessions once a year. The secretariat of the Subcommittee will be provided by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat and its chairperson will be elected on a rotational basis for a period of two years. The ACC Subcommittee may request member organizations, or may establish task forces, to carry out time-limited assignments as the need arises, in particular with regard to its function as task manager for chapter 18 of Agenda 21.

14. With regard to the Inter-agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation, it was agreed that in order to accelerate achievement of sustainable drinking-water supply and sanitation services for all people, with emphasis on the poor and unserved, the organizations of the United Nations system must promote and better coordinate their water supply and sanitation programmes. The Steering Committee, established in 1978, has been an innovative and flexible mechanism for achieving these ends. It is recommended that the Steering Committee, acting as a working group of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources, should have the following terms of reference:

1. The Steering Committee will coordinate the implementation of joint drinking-water supply and sanitation activities of the United Nations system.

2. As a working group of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources, the Steering Committee will assist the ACC Subcommittee in carrying out its functions as task manager for chapter 18 of Agenda 21, particularly in the area of drinking-water supply and sanitation.

3. The Steering Committee will report to the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources at its annual sessions.

4. Under the aegis of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources, the Inter-agency Steering Committee will carry out the following functions for water supply and sanitation programmes:

   (a) Perform a catalytic role with regard to development of joint activities and programmes;

   (b) Advise on the development of common implementation strategies;

   (c) Identify policy issues and further actions required to deal with them;

   (d) Assist in the preparation of analytical reports to intergovernmental bodies;

   (e) Advise on enhancing country-level coordination;

   (f) Establish a network of collaboration among relevant organizations.

5. The Steering Committee will continue to develop further collaboration with outside groups such as the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council and non-governmental organizations.

6. The Steering Committee may request member agencies to carry out specific tasks, in collaboration either with each other or with other organizations.

7. The Steering Committee may invite observers to participate, as needed.

8. The chair will rotate annually among the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNDP, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank according to a fixed schedule.

9. WHO will continue to provide secretariat services to the Steering Committee.

10. The Steering Committee will meet immediately prior to the session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources and may meet at other times, as needed.

2. Cooperation with external support agencies, non-governmental organizations and other organizations (agenda item 4 (b))

15. The members of the ACC Subcommittee discussed the issue of finding means to foster cooperation with organizations outside the United Nations system that were active in the field of water resources. They felt that cooperation with external support agencies, specific non-governmental organizations, and scientific and professional organizations was important in order to enhance the efficiency of the organizations of the United Nations system in carrying out their functions, and that the organizations of the United Nations system should pursue these contacts in a more systematic manner.

16. The ACC Subcommittee recommended that when working groups were convened, they should be given the flexibility to include the participation of such organizations on a selective basis in their discussion of specific issues. In addition, it was felt that, on occasion, it might be desirable for the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources itself to meet informally with those organizations prior to or following its formal sessions.

17. It was agreed that a list of relevant non-governmental organizations with which various United Nations organizations were in contact should be compiled by the secretariat of the ACC Subcommittee. This list would be compiled on the basis of information supplied to the secretariat in time for the next session of the Subcommittee. It was also felt that it would be desirable to produce a brochure about the activities of the organizations of the United Nations system in the field of water resources in order to inform non-governmental organizations and other scientific and professional organizations about the scope of the United Nations system's involvement. It was noted, however, that professional assistance would be required for the preparation of such a brochure and funds would be required for this purpose. It was agreed that the possibility of producing the brochure would be studied further at the next session of the ACC Subcommittee.

18. The members of the ACC Subcommittee agreed on the need to have information on meetings and training activities organized by non-governmental organizations and organizations of the United Nations system in the field of water resources, with a view to enhancing cooperation and minimizing duplication and scheduling conflicts. It was noted that a database about the activities of non-governmental organizations had already been organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and was being extended into an electronic mail (e-mail)-based open network. That database could be enlarged to include information about activities of the organizations of the United Nations system. It was agreed that UNESCO would formulate a proposal to that effect concerning the means for incorporating information into the ACC database, and that it would be circulated to the member organizations of the ACC Subcommittee.

C. System-wide cooperative efforts for the sustainable development and management of water resources

(Agenda item 5)

1. Arrangements for the monitoring of chapter 18 of Agenda 21 (agenda item 5 (f))

19. The ACC Subcommittee discussed arrangements for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the recommendations contained in the seven programme areas of chapter 18 of Agenda 21. It agreed that the Inter-agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation would act as a working group with regard to the programme area (D) concerning drinking-water supply and sanitation. Similarly, the working groups on Water and Urban Development, and Integrated Rural Water Management, would perform the coordinating and monitoring functions in respect of the programme areas concerning water and sustainable urban development (E), and water for sustainable food production and rural development (F), respectively. In the case of the programme area concerning water resources assessment (B), such functions would be carried out through the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) and the Operational Hydrology Programme. Concerning the programme area on the protection of water resources, water quality and aquatic ecosystems (C), the Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS)/Water programme would carry out the coordinating and monitoring functions. For the programme area concerning impacts of climate change on water resources (G), the World Climate Programme (WCP)-Water would perform the coordination and monitoring functions. In the case of the programme area concerning integrated water resources development and management (A), the coordination and monitoring functions would be carried out jointly by the four core agencies, namely, the Department for Development Support and Management Services of the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, the World Bank and UNEP.

20. Issues concerning women, communication and education and research were recognized as cutting across all seven programme areas. Consequently, the ACC Subcommittee agreed on the need to have focal points to ensure that those issues would be given adequate consideration. The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), UNICEF and UNESCO were appointed as focal points for issues concerning women, communication, and education and research respectively.

D. Outcome of sessions of intergovernmental bodies and documentation requirements for future sessions

(Agenda item 7)

1. First session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (agenda item 7 (b))

21. The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its first session, requested the Secretary-General, 4/ to prepare annually a consolidated analytical report that would synthesize information related to United Nations system activities to implement Agenda 21, outline gaps and assess progress achieved and clarify

organizational responsibilities, taking fully into account the report of the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development and other relevant contributions of the Administrative Committee on Coordination.

22. The Commission further requested the Secretary-General 5/ to ensure that the reports requested would, inter alia:

(a) Assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the relevant chapters of Agenda 21;

(b) Identify gaps and opportunities for cooperation, including cooperation with non-governmental organizations and major groups;

(c) Compare and assess the relevance, strength and usefulness of various programmes and activities undertaken by different international organizations;

(d) Clarify organizational responsibilities within the United Nations system and assess whether allocation of tasks adequately reflected the expertise and comparative advantage of different organs, programmes and organizations;

(e) Assess the progress made in reducing unnecessary duplication of efforts and inefficient use of resources.

23. The Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat, in consultation with the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development, appointed the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources as task manager for chapter 18 of Agenda 21. In defining the functions of task managers for various chapters of Agenda 21, the Inter-agency Committee agreed 6/ that the task managers would prepare, in collaboration with concerned organizations, coordinated inputs for the consolidated analytical reports of the Secretary-General that would focus on common United Nations system strategies for the implementation of Agenda 21 and identify areas for further action for consideration by the Commission on Sustainable Development. The task manager's working document would be submitted to the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat. In the case of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources, the contents of that document should be related to specific programme areas of chapter 18 of Agenda 21.

24. Since the Commission on Sustainable Development will hold its second session from 16 May to 3 June 1994, task managers must have all required inputs from organizations by 1 December 1993 and the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat must receive the task manager's working document by 1 March 1994. The length of that working document ideally would not exceed 20 pages.

25. It was agreed that the working document of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources as task manager should be structured around the seven programme areas of chapter 18 of Agenda 21. The five items enumerated in paragraph 22 above would need to be covered for each of the programme areas.

26. With regard to the modalities for the preparation of the document, it was agreed that the Department for Development Support and Management Services of

the United Nations Secretariat would act as focal point for the preparation of inputs for programme area A, UNESCO as focal point for programme area B, WHO as focal point for programme areas C and D, and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as focal point for programme area E. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) will act as focal point for programme area F, and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) will act as focal point for programme area G. These focal points will also link with focal points for women's issues, communication, education and research. Inputs will be submitted no later than 1 December 1993 to the secretariat of the ACC Subcommittee, which will be entrusted with the task of preparing a first draft of the report, which will be submitted in turn to the Chairman of the ACC Subcommittee for his consideration by end January 1994; and a revised draft will be circulated to the member organizations in early February 1994. It was further agreed that a final revision of the draft would be undertaken through a working group of the ACC Subcommittee during the month of February and prior to the second session of the Committee on Natural Resources. The members of the ACC Subcommittee agreed that there was a need to call the attention of the Commission on Sustainable Development to the environmental problems related to large dams, even though Agenda 21 did not pay much attention to issues concerning hydroelectric power.

27. It was also noted that thematic reports for the various clusters of Agenda 21 to be submitted to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its second session would be prepared by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat on the basis of information transmitted by Governments via their country reports. The thematic reports will also rely on information available to organizations of the United Nations system regarding progress and issues in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national and regional levels.

28. A deadline of end November 1993 was given to Governments for the submission of country reports. Upon receipt of those reports, the relevant parts concerning water resources would be circulated to the member organizations of the ACC Subcommittee for their information, and for comments and inputs. It was also decided that organizations would send their inputs for the drafting of the relevant parts of the thematic report by 1 December. A first draft will be prepared by the secretariat of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat and circulated for comments in early February. A revised draft could be presented to the working group, which is to meet in February prior to the second session of the Committee on Natural Resources, so that it might assist the secretariat in the finalization of the draft.

E. Other issues requiring system-wide coordination

(Agenda item 8)

1. Water resources management in African countries (agenda item 8 (d))

29. The members of the ACC Subcommittee expressed grave concern about the serious and deteriorating situation in many African countries with regard to the development, management and use of their water resources. They agreed on the need to make a special effort to coordinate activities at the country level, based on ongoing activities and on innovative approaches to problems. It was agreed that a special inter-agency effort was needed in African countries where problems were most pressing. Initially, the objectives of this effort would be to explore ways in which the organizations of the United Nations system could better collaborate in carrying out their present and future water resources programmes in Africa, and to develop innovative cooperative programmes among the United Nations organizations.

30. WHO was appointed a focal point for this exercise and will work in close consultation with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and UNDP, as well as with all other organizations. Each organization is to provide WHO with information on its water-related programmes and projects in Africa. A progress report will be presented by the focal point to the ACC Subcommittee at its fifteenth session.

2. Other matters (agenda item 8 (e))

31. The members of the ACC Subcommittee discussed the need to provide financial support on a cost-sharing basis for activities to be carried out in the context of the ACC Subcommittee's decisions. The ACC Subcommittee recommended that member organizations, where possible, should make arrangements in order to secure funds, in the order of $10,000 a year, either through the regular budgetary procedures by requesting a line item for support to the ACC Subcommittee, or for the financing of specific activities. It was also felt, as a matter of urgency, that the secretariat of the ACC Subcommittee would need strengthening in order for the ACC Subcommittee to fulfil adequately the functions of task manager for chapter 18 of Agenda 21.

F. Date and place of the fifteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources and election of a chairperson and vice-chairperson (agenda item 9)

32. The ACC Subcommittee recommended that its fifteenth session be hosted by the World Bank at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., from 21 to 23 September 1994. The session would be held in conjunction with the fourth meeting of the Inter-agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation, which would be held immediately prior to the session of the ACC Subcommittee, on 19 and 20 September. The members of the Subcommittee further recommended that Mr. Guy Le Moigne (World Bank) be appointed chairperson for the next two years,

as of September 1994, and that Ms. Margaret Shields (INSTRAW) be appointed vice-chairperson. The provisional agenda for the fifteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources is contained in annex IV to the present document.

II. CONCLUSIONS REACHED AND SUMMARY DISCUSSIONS ON OTHER MATTERS

A. System-wide cooperative efforts for the sustainable development and management of water resources

(Agenda item 5)

1. Information management (agenda item 5 (a))

(a) Monitoring and assessment of information on the freshwater resources of the world (agenda item 5 (a) (i))

33. The representative of WMO, as convener and Chairman of the Working Group on Information Management, introduced document ACC/SWR/1993/3 containing the report of the Working Group on Information Management, which met in Geneva from 30 June to 2 July 1993.

34. A questionnaire had been developed with the assistance of Dr. Ongley (Canada Centre for Inland Waters (CCIW)/Environment Canada) and circulated to the organizations of the United Nations system in order to identify existing databases. The initial results of the survey were reviewed by the Working Group during the above-mentioned meeting. The review showed that 21 different databases were being employed with 8 identified types of software. They deal with the nature and use of the resources concerned, and the impacts on those resources, and institutional and legal aspects.

35. It was noted, however, that not all members of the ACC Subcommittee had responded and they were asked for additional information to complete the survey. The Working Group made several recommendations, inter alia, on the need for additional efforts to complete the work towards the possible establishment of a United Nations-wide network on water information.

36. The members of the ACC Subcommittee discussed the report of the Working Group and its recommendations. They agreed on the need for further work on the feasibility of creating a meta-database on data held by the various organizations of the United Nations system. It was agreed that means would be sought to secure the services of a consultant for an additional period of three months in order to assist the Working Group in coming up with concrete proposals which would be submitted to the ACC Subcommittee at its next session.

37. The representative of FAO informed the participants about his organization's Global Water Information System. This system, which is currently in the developmental stage, will provide a database on agricultural water use and on water resources. With regard to water use in agriculture, the intention is to develop a software for storing and analysing data that could be used at the country level to help national and subnational water management in

agriculture and rural development. A conscious effort is being made to ensure that this database will be compatible with others, such as the Water and Sanitation Monitoring System (WASAMS), which was developed jointly by WHO and UNICEF. With regard to the water resources component, FAO envisages undertaking this activity in full cooperation with UNESCO and WMO. A representative of WHO noted that its Environmental Health Information System was being designed to include project-oriented information on a wide variety of environment-oriented issues. The representative of INSTRAW noted that data on access to clean water, disaggregated by urban/rural areas and by gender, will become available as a result of the preparation of country reports for the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. She stated that data collection should be demand-oriented and disaggregated by gender as much as possible so as to make it a more relevant tool for policy and programme formulation. The WMO representative reminded the participants about the discussion at the last session of the ACC Subcommittee concerning the proposal for a World Hydrological Cycle Observation System (WHYCOS). This concept was currently being developed by UNESCO, the World Bank and WMO. It was stressed that the development of WHYCOS should be closely coordinated with the global climate observing system (GCOS), and that similar arrangements should be made for the proposed global terrestrial observing system (GTOS) to be implemented by UNEP, WMO, FAO, UNESCO and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), particularly for the freshwater component of GTOS. Some concern had been expressed that the plans for GTOS did not pay enough attention to the hydrological cycle, and it was emphasized that the freshwater system was the most sensitive one to possible climate change. In addition, the role of this cycle is not properly understood in a global climate context. These considerations call for close cooperation in the development of WHYCOS and GTOS. The representatives of UNEP and WHO stressed the need for closer coordination in this area with the work of the GEMS/Water programme.

(b) Information management at the country level (agenda item 5 (a) (ii))

38. The members of the ACC Subcommittee discussed matters related to the need to enhance the information management capacity of many developing countries as an essential tool for the sustainable development and management of their water resources. While information (of varying quality) on different physical, economic and social elements may often be available (to different degrees), it is seldom available in a form that lends itself to such use as is sufficiently comprehensive for the purpose of effective policy formulation and planning. The members felt that there was a need for the organizations of the United Nations system to take a concerted approach to assisting developing countries in systematizing their water-related information.

39. The representative of the Department for Development Support and Management Services of the United Nations Secretariat provided information about its groundwater resources software, and the representative of WMO provided information about its Hydrological Operational Multipurpose Subprogramme (HOMS) on technology transfer which was designed, among other things, to assist developing countries with the management of surface-water and groundwater data.

40. The participants noted the recommendations contained in the report of the Working Group on Information Management concerning capacity-building for information management at the national level. In particular, they took note of

the recommendations concerning the need to ensure that there was a consistent approach to the provision of advice on compatibility of software and data quality, and that software used by United Nations organizations was updatable, flexible and able to communicate with other software, and concerning the fact that in the process of capacity-building agencies should promote the use of software requiring a minimum of training.

41. The participants agreed that capacity-building at the country level was an important issue, which in many ways had to take precedence over the question of information at the global level. In fact, the quality and availability of global information were to a great extent a function of the quality and availability of information at the country level. In this regard, the approach taken by the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme with respect to improving the capacity of countries to manage water supply and sanitation data at the country level was noted. It was agreed that information systems had to be demand-driven and adapted to the specific needs of each country. The participants agreed that the Working Group on Information Management should, in its future work, emphasize issues related to improving the capacity of Governments to manage information.

42. The members of the ACC Subcommittee commented about the collapse of hydrological networks in the African continent. This situation has had an impact on global climate modelling in view of the inadequacy of ground truth data in many areas of the continent, as well as on countries in relation to their ability to manage their water resources. It was felt that the situation needed to be brought to the attention of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

2. Water resources and urban development (agenda item 5 (b))

43. In introducing document ACC/SWR/1993/7, entitled, "Inter-agency collaboration on the follow-up to Agenda 21: activities on water and sustainable urban development", the representative of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) recalled the decision taken by the former ACC Intersecretariat Group for Water Resources at its thirteenth session 7/ to establish a working group under the coordination of the Centre to review the programmes and activities of the organizations of the United Nations system in the area of water resources and urban development, and to prepare recommendations on options for inter-agency collaboration within the framework of activities proposed by Agenda 21 in that area. The main objectives of the working group would be to identify policy orientations, objectives, target groups, and the scope and coverage of such activities.

44. The representative of the Centre informed the ACC Subcommittee that basic information on policy orientations and objectives of current and planned activities of the organizations of the United Nations system has been collected through a survey carried out among 10 organizations. The survey had been structured, taking into account the activities included in the subprogramme on water and sustainable urban development of chapter 18 of Agenda 21. The data were enlarged by including relevant activities of other sections of Agenda 21; complementary issues identified in other forums, such as the Water Supply and

Sanitation Collaborative Council; and additional activities recommended by various United Nations organizations. The resulting set of activities already provides a comprehensive framework for the identification of priority areas of intervention to improve water management and sustainable urban development.

45. The survey showed that most organizations focused their current activities on areas related to the protection of water resources, the efficient and equitable allocation of water resources and the promotion of public participation, and that other elements, such as institutional, legal and management reforms and support to local capacity-building, were covered in a less integral manner. According to the reporting organizations, little change was expected in the composition of their planned activities for the coming years. Central and subnational agencies were indicated as the most important target group for current priority activities. A second target group for current activities was composed of community organizations, including special groups like women. The survey indicated a trend towards focusing support activities on two main agents, the public sector and community organizations.

46. The objectives of current and planned activities concentrated on the dissemination of information and policy formulation. Less attention was given to objectives related to technology development, capacity-building and the development of planning and management tools. Few of the reported activities, both current and planned, were urban-specific, and most of them did not have a component of local-level implementation. The survey also showed that the delivery of current and planned activities was mostly carried out through technical assistance and training programmes, and that less priority was attached to the execution of research and development activities leading to the production of policy instruments and management tools. Finally, the representative indicated that the survey had identified a series of constraints for effective inter-agency collaboration in this area, and allowed the formulation of some conclusions that could assist in the execution of the next task of the Working Group in the formulation of a strategy for inter-agency collaboration on activities to improve the management of water and sustainable urban development.

47. The members of the ACC Subcommittee stressed the need to give special importance to certain issues related to water and sustainable urban development, inter alia, water reuse for agriculture; consideration of rural-urban linkages; attention to periurban areas; economic aspects of water provision, pricing policies and allocation of resources; and urban hydrology. They indicated that the formulation of a strategy for action on water and sustainable urban development should take into account recent policy proposals on the theme such as those included in Water Resources Management, a World Bank policy paper. 8/

48. The members of the ACC Subcommittee indicated that the results of the survey might not give a representative view of the overall activities of United Nations organizations, since institutions like the World Bank did not participate in those activities. In response, it was indicated that the main bodies implementing activities in this area had participated in the survey, and that the response received from UNDP ensured the incorporation of the views of the UNDP/World Bank water supply and sanitation programme. However, it was admitted that the determinant influence of World Bank main investment operations

in shaping sectoral policy had not been covered by the survey. The members of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources agreed that broader issues related to the allocation of resources among competing rural and urban uses should be considered within the overall framework of integrated water resources management.

49. It was decided that the work of the Working Group should continue in the formulation of a strategy for inter-agency collaboration on activities to improve the management of water and sustainable urban development to be presented at the next session of the ACC Subcommittee. It was further decided that UNICEF should become an active member of the Working Group, and that the Working Group could invite other external support organizations and non-governmental organizations to participate in its activities. This would ensure the continuous coordination of the ACC Subcommittee's activities with the work being carried out by other agencies and groups outside the United Nations system, such as the Working Group on Urbanization of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council.

50. It was decided that the Working Group on Water Resources and Urban Development would meet at the beginning of 1994. A likely venue for such a meeting could be New York, in February 1994, at the time of the second session of the Committee on Natural Resources.

3. Water resources and rural development (agenda item 5 (c))

51. The representative of FAO presented an account of the actions taken by his organization as lead agency, in close collaboration with relevant United Nations organizations, multilateral and bilateral donors and member nations, to implement the recommendations contained in this programme area of chapter 18 of Agenda 21.

52. He stated that, within FAO, a special action programme on the management of rural water resources had been established. The central theme of the Special Action Programme on Rural Water Resources for Sustainable Agricultural Development (SAP-WASAD) is the integrated approach to rural water management. The objective of the programme is to promote sustainable agricultural and rural development through the application of the principles of integrated rural water management. In achieving this objective, the Programme will assist member Governments in the formulation and implementation of integrated agricultural and rural water programmes at the project, village and provincial levels for more efficient water use and the conservation and protection of the quality and supply of water resources, and in the formulation and implementation of policy, strategy and legislation for fair allocation of water resources for agricultural and rural development and for implementation of the principles of demand management at national and river basin levels.

53. Activities relating to integrated rural water management encompass a wide array of activities that go beyond agricultural water use. Thus, they necessitate an interdisciplinary approach and an inter-agency effort for implementing the Programme at local, national, regional and global levels. With this in mind and in order to establish broad guidelines for implementing the

Programme, a technical consultation on this subject was convened by FAO in March 1993, in close collaboration with UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank and WHO. This consultation produced guidelines for programme implementation and a number of specific recommendations for action. The proceedings from the consultation have been published and are being widely distributed. Joint action is being pursued to implement the recommendations, notably on rural water management, water resources information systems, integrated river basin management, water use efficiency, and waste-water treatment and reuse. WHO, in close cooperation with FAO, will convene a follow-up consultation on rural water management in March 1995, at WHO headquarters.

54. National and subregional action programmes on water and sustainable agricultural development have been formulated in Belize, Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Lake Chad. Currently, the implementation of national programmes is taking place in Egypt, Indonesia and Turkey.

55. As a follow-up to the technical consultation on integrated rural water management and in response to the recommendation of the Committee on Natural Resources, an informal consultation on "Land/water linkages and river basin management" is planned for January 1994 under the joint sponsorship of FAO and the Natural Resources Management Institute of the University of Stockholm. The objectives of the consultation are:

(a) To define land and water linkages;

(b) To develop a conceptual framework to predict land/water/environment interactions;

(c) To establish a landscape and river basin approach to integrated land and water resources management including aspects of scaling;

(d) To draft a programme of action including strategies and models (physical, mathematical and computer simulation/optimization) for integrated water/land management on a landscape or river basin basis.

56. The representative of FAO noted that each year, on 16 October, FAO observed World Food Day. The observance of the Day is centred around a preselected theme which is chosen by the Director-General of the Organization and approved by its governing body. The Director-General has chosen "Water for life" as the theme for World Food Day in 1994. This reflects the importance given by FAO to the efficient use and conservation of freshwater resources for sustainable agriculture and rural development and for humanity as a whole.

57. The members of the ACC Subcommittee commended FAO and the collaborating organizations for the progress achieved in this programme area. Representatives from WHO and UNICEF further elaborated on joint activities to be undertaken under the programme of integrated rural water management. The World Bank representative referred to the complementarity of the work on methodology for rural water management policy review and formulation with respect to the World Bank's comprehensive water management policy approach. The members of the ACC Subcommittee agreed to the establishment of a Working Group on Integrated Rural

Water Management for coordinating the implementation of activities in this programme area. The core members of the Working Group include FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank and WHO.

58. With regard to the work carried out by FAO under this programme area concerning the Nile basin countries, the Subcommittee stressed the need for improved coordination among relevant United Nations organizations. WMO in particular requested that FAO become involved in the Nile forecasting project.

4. The management of water resources as a basis for sustainable development (agenda item 5 (d))

59. The representative of the Department for Development Support and Management Services of the United Nations Secretariat, in introducing this agenda item, apologized for not having been able to prepare the outline of a strategy for the sustainable management of water resources, owing to a variety of reasons beyond the control of the four organizations involved (the Department for Development Support and Management Services, UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank). On the other hand, a number of activities had taken place or were being planned in the near future concerning future elements of a strategy.

60. With regard to sector assessments, the Department for Development Support and Management Services had cooperated with UNDP and the World Bank in a number of countries (Morocco, Yemen (the latter also with FAO), Bolivia, Angola, Madagascar, India, Nepal and Zambia). In addition to assisting Governments in the identification of priority issues in sustainable water resources management (their main function), those assessments were intended to serve as pilot studies for the purpose of assisting in the development of a strategy. Further sector assessments were planned in Tunisia, Morocco and China.

61. With regard to shared water resources, UNEP, the Department for Development Support and Management Services and UNDP are cooperating in the formation of a freshwater consultative forum which is intended to assist in the formulation of guidelines for the integrated management of river and lake basins. An organizational meeting was held in December 1992, and the first full forum meeting was then scheduled to be held from 13 to 16 December 1993 in Geneva. This activity has been formally accepted as an intercessional activity of the working group on water of the multilateral peace talks in the Middle East.

62. With regard to integrated planning, following the successful formulation of an economic water-planning model in China, the Department for Development Support and Management Services has been promoting a multi-objective planning approach to integrated water resources development and management. An interregional training workshop, to which the major regional parties were being invited, will be held in Beijing immediately following the next working group on water of the multilateral peace talks in the Middle East. The representative of the Department for Development Support and Management Services mentioned that the new planning tools would also be used in negotiation processes in disputes over shared water resources.

63. With regard to public participation, the Department for Development Support and Management Services and the World Bank were cooperating with the Water Resources Institute of the United States Corps of Engineers in the use of participatory techniques in dispute-resolution processes. A number of operational activities in legal and institutional arrangements and river and lake basin development were also mentioned.

64. The representative of the World Bank presented the Bank's water resources policy paper which is now available to the public. A one-page summary taken from The World Bank Annual Report 1993 9/ was distributed to the members of the ACC Subcommittee. The paper follows the recommendations of the International Conference on Water and the Environment: Development Issues for the Twenty-first Century, held in Dublin from 26 to 31 January 1992, and of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. It endeavours to present a balance between the need to treat water as an economic good that should be managed at the lowest appropriate level and the need to have a comprehensive analytical approach to the management of water as a finite and vulnerable resource, integrating sectoral water plans and programmes within the framework of national economic and social policy.

65. He also indicated that at the request of the International Water Resources Association (IWRA) and of a number of developing countries, the World Bank, jointly with UNDP and the Department for Development Support and Management Services of the United Nations Secretariat, was preparing a guide for the formulation of national water resources strategies. That guide will address the medium-term to long-term development objectives of water-stressed countries that already have clearly articulated water resources policies along the lines recommended by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. A key element of the proposed strategy is the preparation of a water sector assessment through the participation of key stakeholders in the country, and the development of a capacity-building programme for those stakeholders. The proposed process itself will be an important element of capacity-building. Three of the main objectives of the process are to facilitate ownership, to facilitate transparency and to facilitate sustainability. The guide recognizes, however, the usefulness of "rapid" water sector assessments to address short-term development objectives and to highlight to decision makers the medium-term and long-term issues that should be addressed through a capacity-building programme.

66. The members of the ACC Subcommittee were invited to participate in an informal seminar organized by the World Bank, to be held from 7 to 9 December 1993 in order to discuss the proposed draft guide. Another workshop to discuss a revised draft will probably be organized with interested United Nations organizations in the spring of 1994.

67. The representative of the World Bank also informed the ACC Subcommittee of the ongoing activities to prepare an Aral Sea Action Programme. Following a major diagnostic study carried out by UNEP, the World Bank organized a meeting, which took place in April 1993, of external support agencies interested in participating in coordinated support of an Action Programme to Improve the Water Resources Management of the Aral Sea Basin and in financing projects in the disaster zones that would address environmental and health aspects. A joint

World Bank/UNDP/UNEP mission took place in June 1993 in order to identify a priority action programme. A key issue for the implementation of this programme is the setting up of regional institutional arrangements, during a meeting of the Heads of State of the former Central Asian republics. Following this meeting, the World Bank proposes to organize another meeting of interested external support agencies to agree on a coordinated approach for the implementation of the Action Programme.

68. The members of the ACC Subcommittee welcomed the presentations by the representatives of the Department for Development Support and Management Services of the United Nations Secretariat and the World Bank. It was noted, however, that the policy paper of the World Bank, as important as it was, was a policy statement for the Bank itself and not for the organizations of the United Nations system. While it was recognized that the work carried out by these two organizations constituted an important stepping-stone in a reiterative process, there was an urgent need to proceed with the preparation of a system-wide strategy for the implementation of the recommendations of chapter 18 of Agenda 21. It was agreed, therefore, that the Department for Development Support and Management Services, UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank, with the assistance of UNESCO and other organizations, would continue to work on this question during the intercessional period and report back to the ACC Subcommittee at its next session on a framework for a strategy. It was further agreed that such a framework should take due account of disaster prevention and mitigation policies.

5. Public information with particular reference to World Day for Water (agenda item 5 (e))

69. The participants took note of the relevant part of the report concerning World Day for Water of the last meeting of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), held in London in July 1993. They also took note of the budget prepared by WMO in the context of the JUNIC task force for the celebration of the Day. The participants noted that some of these activities were already being carried out by several organizations and expressed the hope that funding would be found for the implementation of the programme. The FAO representative noted that the theme for World Food Day in 1994 was "Water for life".

70. The members of the ACC Subcommittee noted that while the emphasis for the celebration of World Day for Water was at the national level, advantage had to be taken of particular events of a global nature that could provide visibility and an opportunity for advocacy. In this regard, it was thought that the Ministerial Conference on Drinking Water and Environmental Sanitation, which was being organized by the Government of the Netherlands, offered such an opportunity, particularly since the organizers had the intention of setting aside time on 22 March 1994 for the observance of the Day. It was thought, however, that the observance of the Day as a distinct event on that occasion should be focused on a broader theme than that of the Conference. It was thought that the celebration of the Day in conjunction with the Conference would provide a good opportunity for press coverage, through either a panel discussion or a press conference of a high-ranking representative of the Secretary-General.

It was decided that the Chairman of the ACC Subcommittee would write to the organizers of the Conference, and that those members of the ACC Subcommittee who were also members of the Steering Committee for the Conference would bring the matter up at the next session of the Steering Committee in November 1993.

71. With regard to the theme for World Day for Water in 1994, the participants felt that there was a need to translate it into a more attractive slogan that would appeal to the imagination of the public with respect to all aspects of the subject. The ACC Subcommittee recommended that the theme for World Day for Water in 1995 be "Women and water". They also felt that for themes in ensuing years it would be desirable to follow the programme areas of chapter 18 of Agenda 21. Accordingly, the theme for 1996 would be, "Integrated water resources development and management"; for 1997, "Water resources assessment"; for 1998, "Protection of water resources, water quality and aquatic ecosystems"; for 1999, "Drinking-water supply and sanitation"; for 2000, "Water and sustainable urban development"; for 2001, "Water for sustainable food production and rural development"; and for 2002, "Impacts of climate change on water resources".

B. Report of the Inter-agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation (agenda item 6)

72. The Inter-agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation met on 4 and 5 October 1993, just prior to the meeting of the ACC Subcommittee. The main item on its agenda was its own future role and relationship with other coordinating mechanisms in the light of Agenda 21 and within the overall context of sustainable development. The Inter-agency Steering Committee concluded that it should continue to function, but serving as a working group of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources, and acting as a focal point for the programme area on drinking-water supply and sanitation of chapter 18 of Agenda 21. The terms of reference of the Inter-agency Steering Committee were adopted and referred to the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources.

73. The Inter-agency Steering Committee reviewed the preparatory process for the Ministerial Conference on Drinking Water and Environmental Sanitation to be convened by the Government of the Netherlands in March 1994. It agreed that there was a potential role for the Inter-agency Steering Committee and its individual members in the organizational arrangements of the Conference. In consequence, a letter was sent by the Chairperson of the Inter-agency Steering Committee to the Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment indicating those areas where the Inter-agency Steering Committee felt it could provide support.

74. In addition, a report of the technical consultation on integrated rural water management convened by FAO was reviewed, as well as the outcome of the second meeting of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, held in September 1993. The first of these meetings was held under the corresponding programme area of chapter 18 of Agenda 21.

75. Other questions considered by the Inter-agency Steering Committee concerned a framework for action concerning women, water supply and sanitation for the

1990s (tabled by INSTRAW), and the preparation of the report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session called for under Assembly resolution 45/181. The Committee also reviewed the water supply and sanitation needs of the African continent and referred the issue for action to the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources (see paras. 29 and 30).

c. Outcome of sessions of intergovernmental bodies and documentation requirements for future sessions

(Agenda item 7)

1. First session of the Committee on Natural Resources (agenda item 7 (a))

76. The members of the ACC Subcommittee reviewed document ACC/SWR/1993/4 dealing with the outcome of the first session of the Committee on Natural Resources in relation to water resources issues (29 March to 8 April 1993) and also the documentation requirements for the second session of the Committee.

77. In accordance with the provisional agenda for the second session of the Committee on Natural Resources, as approved by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1993/302, the following four documents on water-related issues are to be prepared:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on activities of the organizations of the United Nations system and inter-agency coordination in the field of water resources;

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on action taken by Governments towards meeting the objectives of the Mar del Plata Action Plan and Agenda 21 on water-related issues;

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on activities related to instruments for global action in other environmental areas and on the substantive contents of such instruments;

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on institutional and legal issues related to integrated water resources management.

78. The Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat has the responsibility for the preparation of the first two reports, while the other two are to be prepared by the Department for Development Support and Management Services. The document reviewed by the ACC Subcommittee contained proposals for the preparation of the first two reports as well as outlines. The members of the ACC Subcommittee agreed with the approaches proposed in the document and with the outline (contained in annexes V and VI to the present document). It was agreed that comments on those outlines would be sent to the Secretary of the ACC Subcommittee by 16 October 1993, and that contributions to the reports would be sent in no later than the end of November 1993.

79. With regard to the last two reports, the representative of the Department for Development Support and Management Services stated that he would circulate for comments drafts of the reports as soon as they became available.

2. Fiftieth session of the General Assembly (agenda item 7 (c))

80. The members of the ACC Subcommittee were reminded that a report on progress concerning drinking-water supply and sanitation was to be prepared for the General Assembly at its fiftieth session in 1995. It was agreed that, as had been the case for the preparation of previous reports on the subject, a working group composed of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank would be formed to assist in the preparation of the report, starting with the formulation of an outline. It was envisaged that extensive use would be made of the data gathered through the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme and of INSTRAW data disaggregated by gender on access to drinking water. The Inter-agency Steering Committee on Water Supply and Sanitation and the ACC Subcommittee would be informed of progress at their next sessions.

D. Other issues requiring system-wide coordination

(Agenda item 8)

1. Preparation of a multilingual glossary of water terms (agenda item 8 (a))

81. At its thirteenth session, the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources discussed the need to establish a multilingual glossary of water resources terms. 10/ As requested at that time, UNESCO compiled information from the various organizations of the United Nations system on this subject, and presented a report to the ACC Subcommittee at its current session.

82. The members of the ACC Subcommittee agreed with the contents of the report, particularly with the recommendation of expanding the glossary into a computerized thesaurus using the information storage and retrieval software package called Computerize Documentation System/Integrated Set of Information Systems (CDS/ISIS). They also noted that the development of a thesaurus would be a costly undertaking. They therefore recommended that:

(a) A detailed feasibility study be carried out by involving an expert group on water-related databases and thesauri in cooperation with the International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC). A cost estimate for this undertaking would be made by UNESCO;

(b) The results of the cost estimate and list of activities and timing for a feasibility study would then be submitted to the ACC Subcommittee at its fifteenth session for further consideration;

(c) If at that time the ACC Subcommittee were to decide to recommend the undertaking of a feasibility study, it should invite UNDP to provide the necessary funding as part of its capacity-building programme.

2. Specific activities of member organizations brought to the attention of the ACC Subcommittee (agenda item 8 (b))

83. The representative of UNICEF stated that the organization was most active in developing community-based, low-cost, appropriate technology-oriented water-supply models in rural and periurban areas. In providing safe water supply and environmental sanitation models, UNICEF gives emphasis to the empowerment of communities, in particular women, capacity-building and improved service delivery systems through better management, operation and maintenance. UNICEF is involved in about 90 countries and, together with WHO, manages the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for water supply and sanitation.

84. The most important mechanism adopted by UNICEF in country-level capacity-building and collaboration involves the preparation of national programmes of action (NPAs) as a follow-up to the goals of the World Summit for Children. Each country is in the process of preparing a national plan and programme to achieve the goal of universal access to safe water and sanitation by the year 2000. This process also provides an opportunity to integrate various activities related to health, education and nutrition, improve the financial management of the sector and increase community participation. The main areas of emphasis for the 1990s are the protection of groundwater, the optimal utilization of water resources and the prevention of environmental pollution through improved access to sanitation and waste management. Various models of integrated water management in rural areas have been successfully carried out in Kenya, and in some countries in Central America, resulting in improved agriculture, water conservation, health and education as well as improved drinking-water supply and sanitation.

85. With regard to UNICEF's activities in Africa, coordination with those of other organizations has been carried out through the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

86. The representative of UNEP and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) informed the ACC Subcommittee about the present exercise being carried out by UNEP concerning the programming of activities for the forthcoming years. In particular, he drew the attention of the ACC Subcommittee to UNEP's activities in the area of freshwater resources. The main focus of the programme will be on issues related to "integrated water resources management for international and national water systems". Five main themes have been identified in this respect: land-based sources of pollution; non-point sources of pollution (urban and rural); drinking-water supply and sanitation; global monitoring and assessment; and coordination. UNEP will collaborate closely with the members of the ACC Subcommittee in the design and implementation of future activities in the above areas.

87. The UNEP/United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) representative also drew the attention of the ACC Subcommittee to the

preparatory activities for the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), to be held in Turkey in 1996. He stated that some of the preparatory activities were closely related to issues concerning water resources infrastructure and human settlements management, and collaboration with the organizations members of the ACC Subcommittee would be needed.

88. The representative of INSTRAW informed the Subcommittee that, for the biennium 1994-1995, its programme on women, water supply and sanitation was currently being integrated into the wider framework of women, environment and sustainable development. In this regard, a training module on women and waste management was being prepared. The training module would look into how problems of waste management affect sanitation and water quality, how women are affected by those problems and how they can contribute to their solution through the formulation, design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes.

89. INSTRAW will also carry out research on linkages between macro-policies and the initiatives of grass-roots groups, non-governmental organizations and other entities at the microlevel that aim at sustainable and equitable development. The effect of discrepancies between these various levels on women's needs and initiatives will provide the basis for the preparation of guidelines and checklists for policymakers to ensure that macro-policies do not counteract micro-initiatives.

90. The representative of the United Nations University (UNU) made a presentation concerning the establishment of an International Network on Water, Environment and Health (INWEH). The network, to be based in the province of Ontario, Canada, is to be established by UNU jointly with the Ontario/Canada Foundation as a partnership between UNU, the university and research community and the private and public sectors, and will be based on existing institutions in Canada and other parts of the world. INWEH will have cooperating units in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The network will be concerned with integrative, interdisciplinary research and development, training, capacity-building and dissemination of knowledge, including community participation, with a focus on water, environment and health. It is envisaged that the network will focus its work on environmental impact assessment with reference to water resources and quality, protection of water-supply and water distribution technologies, and waste-water treatment and reuse. With regard to health it envisaged that INWEH will focus on issues related to public health and toxicology.

91. The representative of UNESCO reported on the outcome of the UNESCO/WMO/ICSU International Conference on Hydrology - Towards the Twenty-first Century: Research and Operational Needs, held in Paris from 22 to 26 March 1993, in conjunction with World Day for Water.

92. The representative of UNESCO also reported on the preparations of the fifth phase (for the period 1996-2001) of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP V). The outline of IHP V has been endorsed by the UNESCO/WMO/ICSU Conference. It is planned that IHP V will have three overlapping clusters of themes dealing with: (a) resource process and management studies; (b) regional studies; and (c) transfer of knowledge, information and technology. Particular interest has been expressed in the planned sedimentation megaproject dealing with siltation problems of reservoirs and deltas. The updated outline of IHP V

has been sent to member States for comments and suggestions. The plan for IHP V will be elaborated and sent to the members of the ACC Subcommittee to solicit their participation in the fifth phase of IHP, as well as to harmonize plans and activities with respect to hydrology research and education.

93. The representative of WHO informed the ACC Subcommittee about activities concerning the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and particularly about the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, to be held in Yokohama from 23 to 27 May 1994. The Conference is likely to attract more than 1,000 participants, including politicians, national International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction committees, representatives from United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations in the field of disaster mitigation. Various agencies of the United Nations system had accepted responsibility for organizing certain components of the Conference. UNESCO, for instance will be organizing the poster session. Several agencies will be organizing the separate three-hour sessions of the scientific programme (FAO, drought; WMO/UNESCO, warning systems; WHO, preparedness).

94. The WMO representative also outlined the work being carried out in order to prepare the Hydrology and Water Resources Programme for the period 1996-2005 as part of WMO's Fourth Long-term Plan. He also commented on Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) activities in hydrology and water resources, and on the preparation of an updated assessment on the impact of climate change to be published in 1995.

95. The FAO representative reported on the Expert Consultation on Global Climate Change and Agricultural Production, which was to be held at FAO headquarters, Rome, from 7 to 10 December 1993. One of the topics to be discussed at that Consultation was the effects of changes in the world hydrological cycle on the regional availability of water resources, on- or off-site.

3. Technological advances of interest to the members of the ACC Subcommittee (agenda item 8 (c))

96. The ACC Subcommittee discussed the advantages of using electronic mail facilities to keep its members informed about their activities. It was agreed that that technology offered an opportunity for an easy flow of information, particularly in view of the fact that UNESCO was establishing a database that would be accessed by e-mail. The members of the ACC Subcommittee agreed to set up a process for information exchange through this system, and UNESCO, together with the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat, would prepare a set of procedures to be circulated to all the member organizations of the ACC Subcommittee for the transmission and access of information on their activities.

4. Other matters (agenda item 8 (e))

97. A letter from the Secretary-General of the International Association for Hydraulic Research (IAHR) addressed to the Secretary of the ACC Subcommittee was

brought to the attention of the members of the ACC Subcommittee. The letter dealt with a proposal for a world water convention stemming from the IAHR's twenty-fifth biennial congress and preceding the silver jubilee seminar. The members of the ACC Subcommittee, aware of the importance attached to the question by this non-governmental organization, suggested that in their reply the Secretary-General of IARH be made aware of the work that would be undertaken by the Committee on Natural Resources at its second session concerning new instruments for global action. The members of the ACC Subcommittee, conscious of the importance of the work of the Committee on Natural Resources in this regard, were aware of the possible need to establish a task force on the subject before the Subcommittee's fifteenth session.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

98. The fourteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources was held at INSTRAW headquarters in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from 6 to 8 October 1993, immediately following the third meeting of the Inter-agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation, also held at INSTRAW headquarters, on 4 and 5 October 1993.

99. The meeting was opened by Mrs. Margaret Shields, Director of INSTRAW, who welcomed the participants. In her introductory remarks, the Director stressed the importance of the current session of the ACC Subcommittee in light of the high priority given to chapter 18 of Agenda 21, and of the role that the ACC Subcommittee was being called upon to play in connection with the implementation of the recommendations contained in that chapter. She noted that INSTRAW has always paid special attention to the work of the ACC Subcommittee, and that although issues related to women were not a specific item in the agenda, they were pervasive throughout the context involving questions related to the integrated development and management of water resources. In that context, she emphasized the need to approach issues related to women, information, communication, education and training in an intersectoral and cross-sectoral manner.

100. Mrs. Shields noted that the ACC Subcommittee had a heavy task ahead of it, and that new and emerging issues would have to be discussed. She noted the importance of reviewing the terms of reference of the ACC Subcommittee as requested by ACC, the need to strengthen cooperation with external support agencies and non-governmental organizations, and the need to strengthen coordination with regard to follow-up actions to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and to the Commission on Sustainable Development.

101. Mr. Wilhelmus G. Sombroek (FAO) was elected Chairman for the current session of the ACC Subcommittee and Mr. Pierre Najlis (United Nations/Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) served as Secretary.

Notes

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

2/ See the report on the first meeting of the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development (ACC/1993/11), para. 2 (a).

3/ Ibid., para. 7.

4/ See the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its first session (E/1993/25/Add.1), chap. I, sect. B, para. 13.

5/ Ibid., sect. D, para. 39.

6/ See the report on the second meeting of the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development (ACC/1993/24), para. 15.

7/ See the report of the ACC Intersecretariat Group for Water Resources on its thirteenth session (ACC/1992/29), para. 19.

8/ Washington, D.C., World Bank, 1993.

9/ Washington, D.C., World Bank, 1993, box 3.5.

10/ See the report of the ACC Intersecretariat Group for Water Resources on its thirteenth session (ACC/1992/29), paras. 44 and 45.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairman: Wilhelmus G. SOMBROEK (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)

Secretary: Pierre NAJLIS (Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development)

United Nations

Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development	Pierre Najlis
Department for Development Support and Management Services	K. Anthony Edwards
United Nations Children's Fund	Gourisankar Ghosh
United Nations Environment Programme	Jorge Gavidia
United Nations University	Sornampillai Chidambaranathan
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)	Jorge Gavidia
International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women	Parirokh Soltan-Mohammadi Julia Tavares

Specialized agencies and related organizations

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Wilhelmus G. Sombroek Arumugam Kandiah
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Andras Szöllösy-Nagy
World Health Organization	Dennis B. Warner Richard Helmer Gregor Watters Ranjith Wirasinha Hans Van Damme
World Bank	Guy Le Moigne
World Meteorological Organization	John Rodda

Annex II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the session.

2. Election of the chairperson for the fourteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources.

3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

4. Strengthening cooperation and coordination in the field of water resources:

   (a) Terms of reference of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources and of the Inter-agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation;

   (b) Cooperation with external support agencies, non-governmental and other organizations.

5. System-wide cooperative efforts for the sustainable development and management of water resources:

   (a) Information management:

      (i) Monitoring and assessment of information on the freshwater resources of the world;

      (ii) Information management at the country level;

   (b) Water resources and urban development;

   (c) Water resources and rural development;

   (d) The management of water resources as a basis for sustainable development;

   (e) Public information with particular reference to World Day for Water;

   (f) Arrangements for the monitoring of chapter 18 of Agenda 21.

6. Report of the Inter-agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation.

7. Outcome of sessions of intergovernmental bodies and documentation requirements for future sessions:

   (a) First session of the Committee on Natural Resources;

   (b) First session of the Commission on Sustainable Development;

   (c) Fiftieth session of the General Assembly.

8. Other issues requiring system-wide cooperation:

   (a) Preparation of a multilingual glossary of water terms;

   (b) Specific activities of member organizations brought to the attention of the ACC Subcommittee;

   (c) Technological advances of interest to the members of the ACC Subcommittee;

   (d) Water resources management in African countries;

   (e) Other matters.

9. Date and place of the fifteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources and nominations for the positions of chairperson and vice-chairperson.

10. Adoption of the report on the fourteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources.

Annex III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

ACC/SWR/1993/1	Provisional agenda for the fourteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources
ACC/SWR/1993/2	Proposed programme of work of the fourteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources
ACC/SWR/1993/3	Report of the Working Group on Information Management
ACC/SWR/1993/4	Outcome of the first session of the Committee on Natural Resources (29 March to 8 April 1993) in relation to water resources issues
ACC/SWR/1993/5	Terms of reference of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources
ACC/SWR/1993/6	Reporting requirements from the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources as task manager for chapter 18 of Agenda 21
ACC/SWR/1993/7	Inter-agency collaboration on the follow-up to Agenda 21: activities on water and sustainable urban development
ACC/SWR/1993/8	Preparation of a multilingual glossary of water terms: UNESCO report on information compiled from various organizations of the United Nations system on recommendations for future action
ACC/SWR/1993/9	Water resources and rural development
ACC/SWR/1993/10	Progress in the implementation of the UN/ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Helsinki, 1992) pending its entry into force

Annex IV

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE ACC SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES

1. Opening of the session.

2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

3. Outcome of sessions of intergovernmental bodies and documentation requirements for future sessions:

   (a) Second session of the Committee on Natural Resources;

   (b) Second session of the Commission on Sustainable Development;

   (c) General Assembly.

4. Coordination and monitoring of chapter 18 of Agenda 21 and system-wide cooperative efforts for the implementation of recommendations contained therein:

   (a) Integrated water resources development and management;

   (b) Water resources assessment;

   (c) Protection of water resources, water quality and aquatic ecosystems;

   (d) Drinking-water supply and sanitation;

   (e) Water and sustainable urban development;

   (f) Water for sustainable food production and rural development;

   (g) Impact of climate change on water resources;

   (h) Water resources management in African countries;

   (i) Information management;

   (j) Public information with particular reference to World Day for Water.

5. Financing of water resources assessment, development and management plans and programmes:

   (a) The Global Environment Facility (GEF) and water resources;

   (b) Formulation of strategies and guidelines for the maximization of benefits derived from limited financial resources.

6. Other issues related to system-wide coordination:

   (a) Procedures for the exchange of information about programmes and activities of organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations;

   (b) Establishment of a computerized thesaurus of water terms;

   (c) Specific activities of member organizations brought to the attention of the ACC Subcommittee;

   (d) Technological advances of interest to the members of the ACC Subcommittee;

   (e) Other matters.

7. Date and place of the sixteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources.

8. Adoption of the report on the fifteenth session of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources.

Annex V

REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES ON ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN THE FIELD OF WATER RESOURCES: OUTLINE

I. INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

In addition to describing activities related to issues concerning paragraphs 18.6-18.22 of Agenda 21, the report would provide information on activities related to recommendations from the first session of the Committee on Natural Resources as follows:

(a) Integrated water and land management: activities of the organizations concerning the adoption and implementation of a holistic, integrated and balanced approach to water and land management, taking into account both their economic and social implications and their impacts on the ecosystem;

(b) Public participation and the role of women in management and development of water resources: activities of the organizations in promoting participatory approaches and the role of women in water resources management and development;

(c) Information management:

(i) Activities of the organizations of the United Nations system concerning the establishment of a system-wide integrated monitoring and assessment network;

(ii) Description of what the organizations of the United Nations system are doing with regard to the recommendation of the Committee on Natural Resources that the United Nations system provide assistance to Governments, as appropriate, towards the establishment or strengthening of databases as tools for integrated action in the development and management of water resources at the national and regional levels, taking into account that "besides water-related data, such databases should incorporate socio-economic, biological, physical and chemical parameters". An indication should be given as to the extent to which the organizations are giving priority attention to drought-prone areas, as recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources.

II. WATER RESOURCES ASSESSMENT INCLUDING CLIMATE CHANGE

Activities of organizations as they relate to issues concerning paragraphs 18.23-18.34, and 18.82-18.90 of Agenda 21. In addition, among the issues brought to the attention of the Committee, the report could provide information about steps taken by UNESCO and WMO concerning the

recommendation that they take the necessary steps to promote a dialogue between members of the scientific community and decision makers.

III. DISASTER PREVENTION AND MITIGATION

(a) Description of what the organizations of the United Nations system are doing with regard to disaster prevention and mitigation in the field of water resources, and to what extent they pay priority attention to the development of strategies and programmes that integrate water and land issues.

(b) Response of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources concerning the recommendation to pay particular attention to the close interrelationship between the prevention and mitigation of water-related disasters and the sustainable development of water resources and ecosystems.

IV. PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES, WATER QUALITY AND AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS

Activities of organizations as they relate to issues concerning paragraphs 18.35-18.46 of Agenda 21.

V. WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

Activities of organizations as they relate to issues concerning General Assembly resolution 45/181 and paragraphs 18.47-18.55 of Agenda 21 as well as relevant paragraphs from other chapters of Agenda 21.

VI. WATER AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Activities of organizations as they relate to issues concerning paragraphs 18.56-18.64, as well as relevant paragraphs from other chapters of Agenda 21.

VII. WATER FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Activities of organizations as they relate to paragraphs 18.65-18.81, and to relevant paragraphs from other chapters.

Information about action taken by FAO concerning the recommendation of the Committee on Natural Resources that it take appropriate steps to develop integrated water, soil and land use management strategies for sustainable development and conservation of the natural resources base; and information about action taken by the World Bank concerning the strengthening and expediting of activities of the International Programme for Technology Research for Irrigation and Drainage (IPTRID).

VIII. CAPACITY-BUILDING

(a) Description of activities by organizations of the United Nations system towards promoting capacity-building as a component of all technical cooperation programmes, and of actions by the United Nations

system to strengthen national capacity-building, with emphasis on human resources development as a tool for institutional strengthening, and to strengthen the capacity to undertake regional assessments of the relationship between water and soils as a resource, based on strategic scientific surveys;

(b) Activities of the organizations of the United Nations system aiming to assist in the development of policies aimed at the retention of trained personnel needed to implement water resources development and management programmes continuously and successfully;

(c) Description of steps being taken towards carrying out selected case-studies to identify the main underlying causes and characteristics of capacity-building problems in water-short regions.

IX. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION AMONG THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

(a) Current efforts towards strengthening coordination and joint programming;

(b) Steps being taken by the organizations of the United Nations system towards adopting and implementing more coherent perceptions of water-related issues and towards addressing the cognitive problems involved through effective intersectoral, interprofessional and interdisciplinary cooperation and effective programming in the area of water resources;

(c) Description of ways in which organs and organizations of the United Nations system enhance their cooperation with regional and interregional organizations that do not belong to the United Nations system, as well as with relevant non-governmental organizations.

Annex VI

STATUS REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES ON ACTIONS ACTIONS BY GOVERNMENTS TOWARDS THE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES: OUTLINE

I. WATER RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

Status of progress and constraints concerning water resources assessment (quantity and quality) including issues related to the development of systematic knowledge based on the collection and dissemination of data on common standards; capacity-building (including human resources development); allocation of financial resources; and transfer and adaptation of technology.

II. PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES, WATER QUALITY AND AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS

Including issues related to capacity-building, transfer of technologies and the flow of financial resources.

III. INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

1. Identification of water demand and patterns of allocation of water resources;

2. Integrated management of land and water resources;

3. Institutional issues concerning the integrated development of and management of water resources;

4. Public awareness and participation;

5. Formulation and implementation of overall policies of capacity-building, transfer of technologies and the allocation of financial resources to the water sector.

IV. FLOOD AND DROUGHT MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING RISK ANALYSIS AND ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Including issues related to capacity-building, transfer of technologies and the flow of financial resources.

V. WATER FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Including issues related to the integration of land and water policies, rural water supply and sanitation, capacity-building, transfer and adaptation of technologies, and the flow of financial resources.

VI. WATER FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Including urban water supply and sanitation, waste waters, the impact of solid-waste disposal on water resources, capacity-building, transfer and adaptation of technologies, and the flow of financial resources.